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General Assembly

Official Records

Seventy-first session

69th plenary meeting
Thursday, 2 February 2017, 10 a.m.
New York

President: Mr. Thomson ..... (Fiji)

In the absence of the President, Mr. Sisilo (Solomon Islands), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

The Acting President: Before proceeding to the items on our agenda, I would like to remind delegations that, as Organizationf 1 January, the sponsorship of all draft resolutions and decisions of the General Assembly plenary is taking place via "General Assembly Plenary eSponsorship" in the e-deleGATE electronic portal, which is maintained by the Secretariat. The requisite registration form was circulated to all Permanent Missions to the United Nations in a communication from the Under-Secretary-General for General Assembly and Conference Management dated 28 November 2016. Additionally, a daily announcement has been posted in *The Journal of the United Nations*.

As today is the first plenary meeting since the operationalization of e-sponsorship in the General Assembly plenary, I would like to remind delegations wishing to sponsor any of the proposals that are before the Assembly this morning to do so electronically. Written forms of sponsorship will no longer be accepted. Immediately preceding action, I will announce that the draft resolution or decision will be closed for electronic sponsoring, after which any other country wishing to sponsor will be invited to do so by pressing the microphone button at its desk. All additional sponsors will be read out by the Secretariat in accordance with the usual practice.

Agenda item 138 (*continued*)

Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations (A/71/764)

The Acting President: In document A/71/764, the Secretary-General informs the President of the General Assembly that 14 Member States are in arrears in the payment of their financial contributions to the United Nations within the terms of Article 19 of the Charter of the United Nations.

I should like to remind delegations that, under Article 19 of the Charter,

> "A member of the United Nations which is in arrears in the payment of its financial contributions to the Organization shall have no vote in the General Assembly if the amount of its arrears equals or exceeds the amount of the contributions due from it for the preceding two full years."

May I take it that the General Assembly takes note of the information contained in document A/71/764?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 14 (*continued*)

Culture of peace

Draft resolution (A/71/L.56)

The Acting President: Members will recall that the General Assembly considered agenda item 14 at its 63rd plenary meeting, on 15 December 2016. Members will also recall that the General Assembly, at its 67th

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plenary meeting, on 22 December 2016, adopted resolution 71/249, and, at its 68th plenary meeting on 23 December 2016 adopted resolution 71/252 under this item.

I now give the floor to the representative of Turkmenistan to introduce draft resolution A/71/L.56.

Mrs. Ataeva (Turkmenistan) (*spoke in Russian*): On behalf of the delegation of Turkmenistan, I should like to thank all delegations for the constructive and helpful negotiations that have led to the substantive text of draft resolution A/71/L.56, entitled "International day of neutrality".

In September 2015, the international community committed to implementing the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030. The new agenda includes the three pillars of sustainable development — social, economic and environmental. As was underscored at the recent high-level dialogue on the theme "Building Sustainable Peace for All: Synergies between the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Sustaining Peace", achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals is closely tied to sustainable peace. There can be no peace without development and no development without peace. Those concepts are inextricably interrelated and must be addressed holistically, bearing in mind that peace, justice, inclusion and the expansion of economic opportunities are all interconnected.

By introducing this draft resolution, on the establishment of an international day of neutrality, under agenda item 14, entitled "Culture of peace", it is our hope to draw the General Assembly's attention to the political efforts of neutral States to achieve sustainable peace, which warrants future study and application. On 12 December 1995 and 3 June 2015, the General Assembly adopted resolutions 50/80 and 69/285, respectively, on the permanent neutrality of Turkmenistan, reflecting a new stage in the understanding of the concept of neutrality.

In December 2015, to sum up our country's 20 years of neutrality, Turkmenistan hosted an international conference on the theme of "The policy of neutrality: international cooperation for peace, security and development", in which we emphasized the need to study neutrality and its role in achieving peace, consensus and development.

In introducing today's draft resolution, the Government of Turkmenistan views the role of neutral States as a stabilizing factor helping to consolidate peace and security. The political phenomenon of neutral States and their experience, including conflict prevention and the use of preventive diplomacy, will no doubt help to strengthen peace and stability and reduce tensions all over the world. The draft resolution emphasizes the fundamental role of preventive diplomacy and highlights the importance of supporting the principles of the sovereign equality of States, territorial integrity, self-determination and non-intervention in the internal affairs of other States.

We express our appreciation to the delegations sponsoring the draft resolution and look forward to its adoption by consensus.

The Acting President: The General Assembly will now take action on draft resolution A/71/L.56, entitled "International day of neutrality".

I give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

Ms. De Miranda (Department for General Assembly and Conference Management): I should like to announce that, since the submission of the draft resolution, in addition to those delegations listed in the document, the following countries have become sponsors of draft resolution A/71/L.56: Armenia, Austria, the Central African Republic, China, Djibouti, Honduras, Indonesia, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Jordan, Lebanon, the Niger, Nigeria, Pakistan, Sierra Leone and Sweden.

The Acting President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to adopt draft resolution A/71/L.56?

Draft resolution A/71/L.56 was adopted (resolution 71/275).

The Acting President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 14.

Agenda items 19 and 73 (*continued*)

Sustainable development

Oceans and the law of the sea

(a) Oceans and the law of the sea

Draft decision (A/71/L.57)

The Acting President: Members will recall that the General Assembly considered sub-item (a) of agenda item 73 at its 54th and 55th plenary meetings, held on 7 December 2016. Members will also recall that, at its 55th plenary meeting, the General Assembly adopted resolution 71/123 under this item. We shall now proceed to consider draft decision A/71/L.57.

The Assembly will now take action on draft decision A/71/L.57, entitled "Accreditation and participation of intergovernmental organizations in the United Nations Conference to Support the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development and its preparatory meeting". May I take it that the Assembly wishes to adopt the draft decision?

Draft decision A/71/L.57 was adopted (decision 71/548).

The Acting President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 19 and of sub-item (a) of agenda item 73.

In order for the Assembly to take action on draft resolution A/71/L.54, it will be necessary to reopen the Assembly's consideration of sub-item (c) of agenda item 19.

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to reopen consideration of sub-item (c) of agenda item 19?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 19 (*continued*)

Sustainable development

(c) Disaster risk reduction

Draft resolution A/71/L.54

The Acting President: Members will recall that, at its 2nd plenary meeting, on 16 September 2016, the General Assembly decided to allocate sub-item (c) of agenda item 19 to the Second Committee. In order to enable the General Assembly to take action expeditiously on draft resolution A/71/L.54, may I take it that the Assembly wishes to consider sub-item (c) of agenda item 19 directly in plenary meeting and proceed immediately to its consideration?

It was so decided.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of Chile to introduce draft resolution A/71/L.54.

Mr. Barros Melet (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): It is my honour to address the plenary of the General Assembly, on behalf of the delegations of Chile and Switzerland, to introduce draft resolution A/71/L.54 for consideration and adoption, under sub-item (c) of item 19 of the agenda of the seventy-first session, on the subject of sustainable development as it relates to disaster risk reduction.

I wish to take this opportunity to acknowledge publicly and express our appreciation for the remarkable work done by the open-ended intergovernmental expert working group on indicators and terminology relating to disaster risk reduction, which met in Geneva. Similarly, we would like to thank the Member States that have sponsored this draft resolution for their support.

The outcome of this draft resolution is the result of an extensive negotiation process that began in March 2015 and concludes today with the adoption of indicators and terminology related to disaster risk reduction. However, the work does not end here; it is just beginning. The implementation of the indicators included in the draft resolution is the next step. Those indicators will enable us to effectively measure the seven global targets of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, which, consistent with the indicators of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, seek to develop policies that foster resilience and cooperation among nations and all stakeholders.

I would also like to express the commitment of my delegation to continuing to support initiatives related to disaster risk reduction and to seek to develop policies linked to the implementation of the Sendai Framework.

In conclusion, I wish to express my gratitude to the Member States that are generously helping my country to combat the forest fires affecting central and southern Chile.

The Acting President: The Assembly will now take action on draft resolution A/71/L.54, entitled "Report of the open-ended intergovernmental expert working group on indicators and terminology relating to disaster risk reduction".

I give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

Mr. Nakano (Department for General Assembly and Conference Management): I should like to announce that since the submission of the draft resolution, in addition to those delegations listed in the document, the following countries have become sponsors of draft resolution A/71/L.54: Albania, Argentina, India, Luxembourg, Malta, Montenegro, Morocco, New Zealand, Nicaragua, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Ukraine. Further sponsors are the Niger, Serbia, Guatemala, Maldives, Nigeria and Senegal.

The Acting President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to adopt draft resolution A/71/L.54?

Draft resolution A/71/L.54 was adopted (resolution 71/276).

The Acting President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-item (c) of agenda item 19?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 30

The role of diamonds in fuelling conflict

Note verbale dated 6 December 2016 from the Permanent Mission of the United Arab Emirates to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (A/71/665)

Draft resolution (A/71/L.55)

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of the United Arab Emirates to introduce draft resolution A/71/L.55.

Mr. Bin Sulayem (United Arab Emirates): Allow me to take this opportunity to thank the President of the General Assembly for convening this plenary meeting on agenda item 30, "The role of diamonds in fuelling conflict". It is a great honour for me to represent the United Arab Emirates in the capacity of Chair of the Kimberley Process in 2016 and to address the General Assembly today.

I would like to thank the preceding Chair, Angola, for its remarkable stewardship of the Kimberley Process in 2015, its consistent support in advancing progress this year and its valuable advice to my delegation. I would also like to take this opportunity to express my sincere gratitude to all the sponsors of draft resolution A/71/L.55 for their kind support, and of course to all the participants of the Kimberley Process, which is a unique multistakeholder initiative working to ensure that the diamond industry works in the service of the producing countries and populations.

Before I introduce the substance of the draft resolution itself, allow me to briefly recount my experience as Chair over the past year.

Representing the Governments, the industry and civil society members involved in the diamond trade, I was able to visit more than 20 countries, including both existing and prospective Kimberley Process members. Our belief is that everything we do in the Kimberley Process must support and direct work that is largely in the developing world. During my chairship, I have been proud to represent the officials who regulate the diamond trade in the producing countries. My trip to the Central African Republic, a country that had been excluded from the Kimberley Process, was particularly important in terms of helping the country to meet its Kimberley Process requirements and enabling it to resume the export of rough diamonds from newly compliant zones.

I would like to thank all delegations that participated in the negotiation process held two weeks ago for their constructive and fruitful cooperation. We are pleased to report on our collective achievements throughout 2016 and to note where improvements can be made.

The draft resolution notes the progress made by the Central African Republic regarding the implementation of the administrative decision and operational framework for the resumption of exports of rough diamonds, and welcomes the decision of the Kimberley Process monitoring team for the Central African Republic to declare four subprefectures as compliant zones. The draft resolution also welcomes the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela's return to participating in the Process and its commitment to hosting a review visit. Another measure of progress that we should highlight is that Gabon was encouraged to begin its admission process.

I would like to conclude by noting three specific proposals for strengthening the Kimberley Process that

the United Arab Emirates made in its capacity as Chair for 2016.

The first is aimed at the fact that the Kimberley Process suffers from a structural deficit — it lacks any form of permanent secretariat with professional skills and resources that can outlive the rotation of country Chairs. For example, the Kimberley Process family has worked hard with the Central African Republic authorities to bring back a legitimate diamond industry there. But our working groups and teams are all volunteers, functioning without an administrative infrastructure. Ideally, we should have been able to work faster and more effectively, but that cannot be done without a permanent secretariat. I am pleased that our proposal to establish such a secretariat has been welcomed and is included in the draft resolution.

Secondly, civil-society participation is vital to the success of the Kimberley Process, but many very experienced non-governmental organizations are effectively excluded because they lack direct access to the funding they need to take part. The draft resolution therefore welcomes the willingness of the Kimberley Process to further discuss the proposal by the United Arab Emirates to establish a multi-donor trust fund or similar mechanism that would provide financial support for participation in the Process by a wide range of civil-society organizations.

Thirdly, the accuracy of the information on Kimberley Process certificates is undermined both by under- and overvaluation. During our chairship, we initiated a series of workshops with the goal of developing a uniform methodology for valuing rough diamonds. Although no consensus has been reached on a detailed proposal, the draft resolution includes elements that could go into making up such a methodology. In its capacity as a member of the Kimberley Process, the United Arab Emirates will continue to explore ways to improve diamond-producing nations' valuation capability so that they can obtain the fairest value for their natural resources.

We are very pleased that those initiatives are recognized in the draft resolution and will be discussed further under the incoming Chair. In that regard, on behalf of the United Arab Emirates, I would like to congratulate Australia, the 2017 Chair of the Kimberley Process, and to welcome the European Union as Vice-Chair for 2017.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the observer of the European Union.

Mr. Babajide (European Union): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union (EU). The European Union and its member States, which act as a single participant in the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme, would first like to congratulate the United Arab Emirates on its chairship of the Kimberley Process and welcome the results that have been achieved in strengthening the Kimberley Process and confronting future challenges. It is my pleasure to confirm that the EU has been selected as Chair of the Kimberley Process for 2018. The EU has been deeply committed to the creation and success of the Process since its beginning, in 2003. Throughout the life of the Process, we have been actively engaged in its committees and working groups and have collaborated closely with our Process partners by participating in and leading review visits. In the course of the EU's chairship of the Process in 2018, we will strive to build on that experience and to forge consensus among all its participants in order to further strengthen and improve the Process for the benefit of all involved in the supply chain, from diamond miners to traders and consumers.

In our view, one of the unique features of the Kimberley Process is its tripartite structure. Industry and civil society are both essential elements in the Process and have contributed much to its establishment and operation. In that regard, the EU calls on all participants and observers to acknowledge the range of opinions within the Process and to continue working together to enhance the scheme's effectiveness and credibility. In particular, we rely on a close working relationship with all of our partners in the Civil Society Coalition to ensure that the Process continues to be an effective tool for peacebuilding and conflict prevention, to monitor its efficacy for diamond-mining communities across the globe and to continue to challenge us to do more and better. We will continue to rely on that relationship to ensure that the Process continues to be effective in future.

As Chair of the Kimberley Process Working Group on Monitoring, the EU has actively contributed to strengthening the implementation of the Process, and we encourage participants to continue committing to enhanced scrutiny through Kimberley Process peer-review visits and substantive annual reports. We would like to express special appreciation to Belarus, Cameroon, the Democratic Republic of the Congo,

India, Lesotho, Sierra Leone, Tanzania and Turkey for hosting review visits in 2016, and to Botswana, Brazil, Ghana, Israel, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Mauritius, Norway, Panama and Togo for inviting review visits in 2017. We note that the Process's administrative decision on peer review calls for all its participants to host a review visit every three years. We firmly believe that the consistent use of those implementation tools will strengthen the Process's ability to tackle the illicit trade in conflict diamonds, and we call on all participants to step up their efforts in that regard. In that context, we have promoted the development of a guidance note on the organization and conduct of review visits that will serve as a practical tool for enabling both review-visit team members and host participants to prepare for the visits as well as possible.

The EU has served as Chair of the Kimberley Process Working Group on Monitoring for more than 13 years, during which it has worked to forge consensus on the handling of delicate issues related to the trade in rough diamonds. Together with the other members of the Working Group, we have worked to reinforce the integrity of the Kimberley Process system and to ensure that it can emerge from new challenges strengthened and reinforced. Looking to the future and the rotation of Chairs of the working bodies of the Process, the EU congratulates South Africa and Botswana, newly selected as Chair and Vice-Chair of the Working Group, respectively. We have full trust and confidence that their leadership and vision will give renewed impetus to this important work.

The EU strongly welcomes the significant progress that has been made in the Central African Republic, especially through the herculean efforts of the Kimberley Process monitoring team. The declaration of four sub-prefectures as compliant zones is a milestone in the country's evolution, and we have taken positive note of its initiative to engage cooperatively with its neighbours and their ongoing work with several stakeholders in the international community.

The EU also welcomes the readmission of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela to the Kimberley Process. It is an important step, and we encourage the Venezuelan authorities to work to ensure compliance with the minimum requirements. We also welcome the recent steps taken by the Mano River Union countries in West Africa to implement the regional approach initiative, highlighted by the Security Council in its resolution 2153 (2014), which lifted the embargo on the export of rough diamonds from Côte d'Ivoire. We particularly welcome the continuing support to the Mano River Union countries provided by the technical team of the Working Group on Monitoring and the Group of Friends of the Mano River Union, especially their ongoing efforts to formalize the role of the Mano River Union secretariat and involve other implementing partners.

In 2016, the efforts continued to prevent diamonds from fuelling conflict and to ensure that they ultimately contribute to economic and social development, particularly in developing countries. In that context, the EU welcomes the commitment of the Kimberley Process to the ongoing implementation of the Washington Declaration on integrating development and artisanal and small-scale diamond mining, as well as of the Moscow Declaration on improving internal controls over alluvial diamond production in the Kimberley Process.

The EU welcomes the fact that over the past 12 months the issue of the valuation of rough diamonds, particularly the development of a uniform methodology, has been made a high priority. We strongly support the efforts of the Kimberley Process towards creating fair living conditions for people at the beginning of the diamond pipeline, namely artisanal and alluvial miners in developing countries.

Another important initiative that we highly valued was the direct engagement with the Financial Action Task Force on its report related to risks in the diamond supply chain. We would welcome a continuation of this fruitful engagement as part of ongoing efforts to further strengthen Kimberley Process implementation.

The EU would like to express its gratitude to the United Arab Emirates for its stewardship of the Process last year. We now welcome Australia as the current Kimberley Process Chair, and also welcome its vision as Chair for 2017, aimed at further strengthening the Kimberley Process implementation and ensuring that the trade in rough diamonds is used for the benefit of all people. We very much welcome and support the priorities Australia has outlined for its chairship, and we will encourage Australia to ensure that the Kimberley Process renews its engagement with the civil-society coalition in order to re-establish the tripartite nature of the Kimberley Process.

The EU looks forward to working closely both with Australia and India in a troika of Kimberley Process

chairs to deliver on a consistent work programme that will prepare the Kimberley Process for the challenges of the future.

Ms. Bird (Australia): Australia would like to express its appreciation to the United Arab Emirates for its efforts as Chair of the Kimberley Process in 2016. We thank the United Arab Emirates for its generous hosting of Kimberley Process meetings and for organizing additional special forum meetings. We acknowledge the hard work of all stakeholders who contributed to the outcomes of the Kimberley Process in 2016. In particular, we recognize the efforts of the six committees and working groups of the Process, as well as special bodies.

The Kimberley Process monitoring team for the Central African Republic undertook important work in 2016, including through its ongoing efforts to ensure compliance with the Kimberley Process through designated compliance zones. We support the continued collaboration of Mano River Union countries to address challenges in the West Africa region. We also welcome Venezuela's resumption of its participation, and the progress achieved towards the implementation of the Kimberley Process by candidate countries in 2016.

Australia is honoured to chair the Kimberley Process in 2017. We proudly support the Kimberley Process and the legitimate, transparent and conflict-free trade of rough diamonds. As Chair, we are committed to working with all stakeholders across Governments, industry and civil society to ensure the continued effectiveness and integrity of the Process.

Australia congratulates the European Union on assuming the role of Vice-Chair of the Kimberley Process in 2017, in advance of assuming the role of Chair and host in 2018. We also congratulate India on its willingness to take over the roles of Vice-Chair in 2018, and Chair and host in 2019.

Our chairship will focus on strengthening the implementation of the Kimberley Process, including ways to further enhance the security of certificates and rough diamond shipments. We will also conduct a comprehensive review of the Kimberley Process to develop options to further strengthen the scope, integrity and implementation of the Process to ensure its continuing, central relevance.

As Chair for 2017, Australia will continue the practice of holding special forums to canvass broader matters pertinent to the diamond trade. Themes for such dialogues include sustainability reporting, alluvial and artisanal diamond mining, synthetic diamonds and valuation. We will also hold a special session to share lessons learned from cooperation between the indigenous community and the mining sector in Australia.

We look forward to engaging with all Kimberley Process stakeholders and to welcoming delegates to Australia this year.

Mr. Burity (Angola): At the outset, I would like to express my delegation's appreciation and gratitude to the United Arab Emirates, the outgoing Chair of the Kimberley Process, for its distinguished leadership and hard work in facilitating and coordinating the negotiations on draft resolution A/71/L.55, before the Assembly today, which resulted in a text that we were able to adopt by consensus during the negotiations.

The agenda item before us today is of great importance not only because it seeks to protect the legitimate trade in diamonds, but also because it symbolizes the international community's resolve to individually and collectively do its part to ensure that never again will resources such as diamonds bring suffering and sorrow to humankind.

Back in 2003 in Kimberley, South Africa, the international community took action to curb the trade in conflict diamonds by establishing a distinct and revolutionary international scheme, which Angola has been proud to support since its inception. The Kimberley Process is indeed a remarkable multi-stakeholder approach in which Governments, the diamond industry and civil society work together to monitor and control the rough diamond trade, and which is now a model for other efforts to combat natural-resource-based conflict. I strongly believe that Angola would not have had to face three painful decades of civil war — one of the longest conflicts in the history of humankind, mainly fuelled by illicit rough diamonds — if such a powerful mechanism had been implemented earlier.

Angola firmly supports the Kimberley Process principles and objectives, and its Certification Scheme, for it has been proven to contribute to effectively preventing the trade of illicit rough diamonds in the legitimate diamond market, as well as to preventing such illegal transactions from promoting armed conflict and unlawful activities that threaten international peace

and security in many parts of the world, especially in Africa.

In the spirit of the Kimberley Process and its oversight of rough diamonds, the draft resolution before us today, along with other United Nations legal instruments, demonstrates the firm resolve of the States Members of the United Nations and the international community to prevent the creation of links between the illegal trade of rough diamonds and armed conflicts. It also reaffirms a strong commitment to the Process as an international vehicle and emphasizes its continuing role in regulating the diamond trade.

The Kimberley Process demonstrates that when Governments work together with the private sector and civil-society organizations they can achieve meaningful outcomes. Their joint efforts to promote the legitimate trade in diamonds truly help countries to reduce poverty, promote transparency and economic development, combat smuggling and money laundering, and meet the Sustainable Development Goals.

In addition, Angola also emphasizes the importance of the tripartite nature of the Kimberley Process. Collaboration with diamond-industry associations, international organizations and enforcement agencies within the Process must be enhanced. All those stakeholders benefit from the open exchange of information and access to it.

Last but not least, Angola welcomes the endorsement in Dubai of the Commonwealth of Australia's assumption of the 2017 chairship of the Kimberley Process and the selection of the European Union as its Vice-Chair for 2017. My delegation looks forward to working with the 2017 Chair, as well as with all Kimberley Process participants and observers in promoting greater cooperation within the Organization.

Mr. Nkoloi (Botswana): I thank you, Sir, for convening today's important debate on the the role of diamonds in fuelling conflict. At the outset, I would like to express our profound gratitude and appreciation to the United Arab Emirates for its able conduct of the affairs of the Kimberley Process during its tenure as Chair in 2016. We commend the United Arab Emirates for its leadership in contributing towards the ideals of the Kimberley Process, as well as for being part of the Kimberley Process architecture, which strives to transform and reform itself.

As a founding member of the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme, Botswana remains encouraged by concerted international efforts to stem the tide against the so-called blood diamonds or conflict diamonds and to bring integrity to the diamond industry. To that end, we reaffirm our commitment to refusing to condone the illicit trade in rough diamonds and the proliferation of conflict as a consequence of the diamond trade. We are therefore convinced that efforts must be made to safeguard the tripartite nature and character of the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme.

It is only through mutual respect, collaboration and cooperation that we can pursue the same goal, the same objective and the same vision. The participation of civil society must therefore be respected and recognized as an integral part of this arrangement. In that regard, Botswana has consistently sponsored and supported this annual resolution of the General Assembly.

The fourteenth plenary meeting of the Kimberley Process has come and gone, and we would like to express our appreciation to the Government and the people of the United Arab Emirates for their wonderful hospitality and support during our stay in Dubai. Looking back at the Kimberley Process, we continue to be inspired and encouraged by the story of diamonds, as well as the very significant transformation that has taken place in the diamond industry. For us, diamonds are a source of life. They bring food to the table, help us invest in our children through education and training, create human capital and promote inclusive sustainable development.

That is why we will do everything in our power to help refine and redefine the story of diamonds as it relates to human life and human nature, while placing a high premium on integrity and high ethical standards for sustainable development. We welcome the report of the fourteenth plenary meeting of the Kimberley Process (A/71/665, annex) and note with satisfaction that the Process continues to make significant strides in regulating international trade in rough diamonds. The report also notes positive developments including enhanced implementation of Kimberley Process requirements, greater participation in review mechanisms and increased transparency and accuracy in reported statistics. The report further underlines the challenges of non-compliance by some participants on issues that need to be addressed with the utmost urgency, especially for new participants in the Kimberley Process or those whose sanctions have

recently been lifted by both the Security Council and the Kimberley Process family.

Borrowing from the tag line of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development — "leaving no one behind" — we cannot afford to expect countries without the institutional capacity and capability to adhere to Kimberley Process standards to do so without establishing a robust process for assisting them. We are therefore proud to serve as Vice-Chair of the Working Group on Monitoring and are ready to share lessons, experiences and best practices on how to run a professional diamond industry.

Pursuant to Security Council resolutions and decisions on the Kimberley Process and the Central African Republic, we are delighted to welcome the Central African Republic back into the Kimberley Process family, as it looks to take its rightful place in the diamond industry and trade. We in Botswana will therefore make ourselves available to our sister nation of the Central African Republic as it prepares for the diamond trade in the post-conflict era. In reaffirming our commitment to the Kimberley Process Initiative, we welcome Australia, as incoming Chair of the Kimberley Process in 2017, as well as the selection of the European Union as Vice-Chair. I assure them of our delegation's continued support, cooperation and good will.

The Acting President: The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/71/L.55, entitled "The role of diamonds in fuelling conflict: breaking the link between the illicit transaction of rough diamonds and armed conflict as a contribution to prevention and settlement of conflicts". The draft resolution is now closed for electronic sponsoring.

I give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

Mr. Nakano (Department for General Assembly and Conference Management): I should like to announce that since the submission of the draft resolution and in addition to those delegations listed in the document, the following countries have become sponsors of draft resolution A/71/L.55: Albania, Brazil, Cyprus, Greece, Hungary, Lithuania, Montenegro, Namibia, Sweden and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. Additional sponsors are the Central African Republic, the Netherlands and Armenia.

The Acting President: May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/71/L.55?

Draft resolution A/71/L.55 was adopted (resolution 71/277).

The Acting President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 30?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 115 (*continued*)

Appointments to fill vacancies in subsidiary organs and other appointments

(g) Appointment of members of the Committee on Conferences

Note by the Secretary-General (A/71/107)

The Acting President: Members will recall that at its 45th plenary meeting on 10 November 2016, the Assembly took note of the appointments of Austria, Jamaica, Japan, Kenya, Morocco and the United States of America as members of the Committee on Conferences for a period of three years beginning on 1 January 2017.

Members will further recall that one seat from among the Group of Asia-Pacific States, for a period beginning on the date of appointment and ending on 31 December 2019, and two seats from among the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States, for a period beginning on the date of appointment and expiring on 31 December 2018, remain to be filled. On the recommendation of the Chair of the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States, I have appointed Guyana as a member of the Committee on Conferences for a term of office beginning on the date of appointment and ending on 31 December 2018. May I take it that the Assembly takes note of this appointment?

It was so decided.

The Acting President: With regard to the remaining one seat from the Asia-Pacific States and one seat from the Latin American and Caribbean States, I urge those Groups to submit their candidatures as soon as possible.

The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of sub-item (g) of agenda item 115.

(h) Appointment of members of the Joint Inspection Unit

Note by the President of the General Assembly (A/71/752)

The Acting President: As indicated in the note by the President (A/71/752), the General Assembly is required during the current session to appoint members to fill the vacancies in the Joint Inspection Unit that will arise from the expiration of the terms of office on 31 December 2017 of Mr. Gopinathan Achamkulangare of India, Mr. Gennady Tarasov of the Russian Federation, Mr. George Bartsiotas of the United States of America, Mr. Jean Wesley Cazeau of Haiti and Ms. Sukai Elie Prom-Jackson of the Gambia.

Members will recall that, at its 29th plenary meeting, on 14 October 2016, the Assembly decided to fill one vacancy in the Joint Inspection Unit for a term of office beginning on 1 January 2017 and expiring on 31 December 2021, which resulted from the resignation of Mr. George Bartsiotas of the United States of America with effect from 30 September 2016. This vacancy was subsequently filled at the 48th plenary meeting, on 21 November 2016, by Ms. Eileen Cronin of the United States of America.

In accordance with the procedures described in article 3, paragraph 1, of the statute of the Joint Inspection Unit, and pursuant to Assembly resolution 61/238 of 22 December 2006, and having drawn up a list of countries from among the regional groups concerned following consultations with Member States, I requested that the Gambia, Haiti, India and the Russian Federation propose candidates to serve for a period of five years, beginning on 1 January 2018.

As also indicated in document A/71/752, the candidates, in accordance with paragraph 7 of Assembly resolution 59/267 of 23 December 2004, should have experience in at least one of the following fields: oversight, audit, inspection, investigation, evaluation, finance, project evaluation, programme evaluation, human resources management, management, public administration, monitoring and all-programme performance, as well as knowledge of the United Nations system and its role in international relations.

As further indicated in document A/71/752, after holding the appropriate consultations described in paragraph 2 of article 3 of the statute of the Joint Inspection Unit, including consultations with the President of the Economic and Social Council and with the Secretary-General, in his capacity as Chair of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination, I submit to the Assembly the candidatures of Ms. Sukai Prom-Jackson of the Gambia, Mr. Jean Wesley Cazeau of Haiti, Mr. Gopinathan Achamkulangare of India and Mr. Nikolay Lozinskiy of the Russian Federation for appointment to the Joint Inspection Unit for a five-year term of office beginning on 1 January 2018 and expiring on 31 December 2022.

May I take it that it is the wish of the Assembly to appoint Ms. Prom-Jackson, Mr. Cazeau, Mr. Achamkulangare and Mr. Lozinskiy as members of the Joint Inspection Unit for a five-year term of office beginning on 1 January 2018 and expiring on 31 December 2022?

It was so decided.

The Acting President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of sub-item (h) of agenda item 115.

The meeting rose at 11.20 a.m.